Refusal to lift poor quality Punjab rice

941. SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Andhra Pradesh Government has refused to lift the consignment of five lakh tonnes of Punjab rice sanctioned for its food for work programme;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Central Government had received any request from the Punjab Government to revise its procurement norms when the FCI refused to lift 'Poor quality' paddy stock from the State two years ago; and

(d) if so, the action taken by Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI U.V. KRISHNAM RAJU): (a) and (b) The Government of Andhra Pradesh had initially expressed preference for stocks procured from within the State. However, the State Government has now lifted about 5.5 lakh tonnes of foodgrains under Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) and other schemes.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) On the request of the State Government of Punjab, the Central Government had relaxed the procurement norms of paddy in respect of damaged, discoloured, sprouted and weevilled grains to the extent of 8% during Kharif Marketing Season 2000-01. No relaxation has been given in subsequent years.

Food insecurity and malnutrition in urban India

942. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made a detailed examination of the recently released "Food Insecurity Atlas of Urban India" brought out jointly by the U.N. World Food Programme and the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation highlighting *inter-alia* the very high level of food insecurity and malnutrition prevalent in urban India; and